

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES—Wednesday, September 15, 1999

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. EWING).

DESIGNATION OF THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 15, 1999.

I hereby appoint the Honorable THOMAS W. EWING to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Reverend James David Ford, D.D., offered the following prayer:

O God, our help in ages past and our hope for years to come, we pray for a unity of spirit in our nation and for respect and honor between every person. We rejoice in the diversity of our experiences even as we celebrate the common creation that we share by Your mighty hand. As we see each other with our own perspective, may we also see each other with a respect and dignity that is worthy of the blessings that You have given us. Guide us and be with us this day and every day. Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PITTS) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. PITTS led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 1-minutes on each side.

URGING MEMBERS TO SUPPORT AMERICA'S MILITARY BY VOTING YES ON THE DOD AUTHORIZATION BILL

(Mr. GIBBONS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GIBBONS. Mr. Speaker, our military forces have been facing 13 consecutive years of defense cuts. Now we are at a critical point where personnel and readiness levels are literally bleeding our defense capabilities dry. Retention and readiness are two critical issues facing our military forces today, and we must provide the necessary incentives for our troops to retain their skills to get the job done.

Furthermore, Congress must support increased health benefits and pay increases for our Nation's military men and women. We must also fully fund their equipment modernization and training so our troops can maintain a peak level of performance.

Before this Congress or this administration even so much as debates yet another deployment of our Armed Forces, we must without question provide the necessary funding for our brave men and women to perform the jobs we have asked them to do.

Today this body has an important opportunity to address the critical issues of underfunded quality of life readiness and modernization requirements in our military. I urge my colleagues to tell the military men and women in their districts that they support them by voting yes on the DOD authorization bill today.

FEAR AND INTIMIDATION HAVE NO PLACE IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

(Mr. TRAFICANT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. TRAFICANT. Mr. Speaker, last year under oath the IRS admitted in testimony "We use fear and intimidation to make Americans pay their taxes." That is right, fear.

It is not just the IRS. Take Waco. Waco is about a group of Americans, good, bad, or indifferent, who defied the government. They stood up to the government and the government crushed them. The government crushed them, to send a message.

What was that message, Mr. Speaker? They had better fear the government. Beam me up, Mr. Speaker. Fear

is an ugly four-letter word. It has no place in American government. I yield back all the fear and intimidation of our government agencies.

TIME TO END THE MARRIAGE TAX PENALTY

(Mr. WELLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I have often asked from the well of this House a pretty basic question. That is, is it right, is it fair under our tax code, that 21 million married working couples with two incomes, a husband and wife who are both in the work force, pay higher taxes under our Tax Code just because they are married? Is it right, is it fair, that a married working couple pays more in taxes than an identical couple with an identical income who live together outside of marriage?

It is wrong that our Tax Code punishes society's most basic institution. I want to produce Shad and Michelle Hallihan from Joliet, Illinois, two public schoolteachers. They suffer the marriage tax penalty. Michelle and Shad are just one of the 21 million married working couples who suffer the marriage tax penalty.

This House, the Senate, this Congress, this Republican Congress, has worked to eliminate the marriage tax penalty. In fact, we passed as part of the Financial Freedom Act legislation which essentially wipes out the marriage tax penalty for the majority of those who suffer.

The question is, will the President join with us in signing into law our effort to eliminate the marriage tax penalty?

REPUBLICANS ARE REWRITING THE CALENDAR TO CREATE THE APPEARANCE OF NEW MONEY

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, the national Census mandated by the United States Constitution and conducted every 10 years since 1790 has been newly discovered by our Republican friends and declared an emergency for spending purposes, to avoid spending limitations.

Now the Republicans have found a new gimmick. They are actually rewriting the calendar. The old 12-month